

REMARKS

The Applicants thank the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application. Claims 21 and 22 are cancelled herein without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein. Claims 1-20 are pending. Claims 1, 8, 10, and 17 are amended. Claims 1 and 10 are independent. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks set forth herein.

Reasons for Entry of Amendments

At the outset, it is respectfully requested that this Amendment be entered into the Official File in view of the fact that the amendments to the claims automatically place the application in condition for allowance.

In the alternative, if the Examiner does not agree that this application is in condition for allowance, it is respectfully requested that this Amendment be entered for the purpose of appeal. This Amendment reduces the issues on appeal by placing the claims in compliance with 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, and by canceling allowable claims 21 and 22 and incorporating the allowable subject thereof into independent claim 1 and 10, respectively. This Amendment was not presented at an earlier date in view of the fact that Applicants did not fully appreciate the Examiner's position until the Final Office Action was reviewed.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner states that:

Claim 21 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph; and

Claim 22 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter. In response independent claims 1 and 10 have been amended herein to incorporate the allowable subject matter of allowable subject matter of objected-to claims 21 and 22, respectively.

Therefore, independent claim 1 and 10 are in condition for allowance.

Drawings

It is gratefully appreciated that the examiner has accepted the drawings.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph

Claim 21 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

In order to overcome this rejection, the Applicants cancelled claim 21, thereby addressing the issue pointed out by the Examiner. The Applicants respectfully submit that the claims, as amended, particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the Applicants

regard as the invention. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and §103(a)

Claims 1, 2, 4, 8, 10, 11, 13, 17, and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by GB 1,240,506;

claims 3 and 12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over GB 1,240,506 in view of Butterfield et al. (U.S. 4,872,879); and

claims 5-7 and 14-16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over GB 1,240,506 in view of Smyers (U.S. 4,546,997).

These rejections are respectfully traversed.

While not conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner's rejection, but merely to advance prosecution of the present application, independent claims 1 and 10 have been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of allowable subject matter of objected-to claims 21 and 22, respectively.

At least for the reasons described above, the Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of elements as set forth in each of independent claims 1 and 10 is not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record, including GB 1,240, 506.

Therefore, independent claim 1 and 10 are in condition for allowance.

Dependent Claims

The Examiner will note that non-narrowing amendments have been made to dependent claims 8 and 17 merely to place them in better form.

All dependent claims are in condition for allowance due to their dependency from allowable independent claims, as well as for the additional novel limitations set forth therein.

All claims of the present application are now in condition for allowance.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and §103(a) are respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

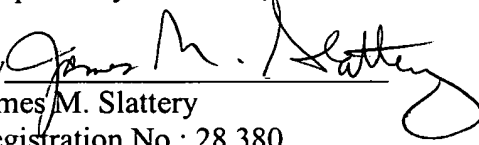
All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and that the present application is in condition for allowance.


If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, he is invited to telephone Carl T. Thomsen (Reg. No. 50,786) at (703) 208-4030 (direct line).

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17, particularly extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

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